

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGRE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9917

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, AR

SUBJECT: MEAT INSPECTION

REFS: STATE 079282, STATE 078730

FOR: EB-KATZ, ARA-RONDON.

DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR SECRETARY BERGLAND.

1. I WAS SHOCKED AND APPALLED BY THE MESSAGE CONTAINED IN STATE 078730 AS THREE WEEKS AGO I MET PERSONALLY WITH THE APHIS REVIEW TEAM AND WAS GIVEN AN INDICATION THAT THEIR REVIEW OF ARGENTINA HAD GONE GERNALLY WELL AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE REPEAT NO CIRCUMSTANCE, WAS I LED TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WERE ANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS THAT COULD WARRANT THE ACTIONS CALLED FOR IN STATE 078730. WE CANNOT, REPEAT CANNOT, TOLERATE AN ACTION SUCH AS SUSPENDING ARGENTINE BEEF EXPORTS TO THE U.S. WHILE THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE REMAINS IN THE FOREFRONT IN ARGENTINA. THIS ACTION WOULD SURELY BE INTERPRETED AS AN ECONOMIC SANCTION AS THE U.S. MARKET REPRESENTS AN OUTLET FOR UP TO \$100 MILLION AND 27 PERCENT OF ARGENTINA'S BEEF EXPORTS IN SOME YEARS.

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2. I HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LEARNED THAT THE APHIS VETERINARY TEAM DID DISCUSS THE MATTER OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PAYING THE SALARIES OF PLANT INSPECTORS AND THAT THE APHIS TEAM WAS INFORMED THAT THE PRESIDENT SIGNED IN EARLY MARCH A SPECIAL DECREE PERMITTING 270 INSPECTORS TO BE CONVERTED FROM THE PRIVATE PLANT PAY-ROLLS TO THE FEDERAL SERVICES' OR TO HIRE ADDITIONAL INSPECTORS

AND THAT THE APHIS TEAM WAS GIVEN A COPY OF THIS DECREE AND RENEWED THE LOCAL SERVICES' PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CONVERSION OF THE INSPECTORS TO THE FEDERAL PAYROLL. THE IMPRESSION OF MY STAFF WAS THAT WITH THIS DECREE AND THE OUTLINED PLAN, THE APHIS TEAM WAS SATISFIED THAT THE ARGENTINE VETERINARY SERVICE WAS WORKING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, AND IF THEY FULFILLED THEIR OBJECTIVES, THEY WOULD BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH USDA REGULATIONS. THEREFORE, STATE 078730 CAME AS A BOMBSHELL AS SURELY TWO OR THREE WEEKS HAS NOT BEEN A SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE ARGENTINE VETERINARY SERVICE EITHER TO CONVERT THE INSPECTORS OR HIRE ADDITIONAL ONES.

3. ONE POINT THAT I WOULD LIKE THE USDA TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT THE CURRENT ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT INHERITED MANY PROBLEMS FROM THE PAST ADMINISTRATIONS, BUT THIS GOVERNMENT IS INTENT ON CORRECTING THE ERRORS OF THE PAST. AS AN INDICATION OF THE GOA'S HIGH PRIORITY IN MEAT INSPECTION WAS THE ACCOMPANYING BY THE ARGENTINE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE OF AN APHIS TEAM ON THE PLANT REVIEW. THIS PROBLEM OF THE INADEQUATE SALARY SOURCE FOR THE INSPECTORS MAY HAVE BEEN INHERITED, BUT ALSO WAS COMPOUNDED BY A FREEZE BY THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE FILLING OF VACANCIES. THUS AS INSPECTORS LEFT THE SERVICE OR NEW PLANTS CAME ON THE USDA LIST, A METHOD HAD TO BE FOUND TO PAY THE REQUIRED INSPECTORS. THE DECREE SIGNED IN EARLY MARCH FREEING UP THE 270 INSPECTOR SLOTS WAS NOT JUST A REACTION TO THE VISIT BY THE APHIS TEAM, BUT THE CULMINATION OF SEVERAL MONTHS WORK AND AGAIN AN INDICATION OF THE GOA'S DESIRE TO COMPLY WITH USDA NORMS.

4. IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THIS MATTER, I AM INSTRUCTING OUR AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE TO GO AND SEE THE GOA INSPECTION AUTHORITIES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON MONDAY, TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT THIS MATTER OF THE SALARIES FOR THE INSPECTORS HAS REACHED THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF CONCERN WITHIN THE USDA AND TO SOLICIT AN IMMEDIATE REPORT FROM THE INSPECTION AUTHORITIES AS TO: (1) ACTIONS TAKEN, (2) PROGRESS TO DATE IN CONVERTING THE SALARIES, AND (3) THE EXPECTED DATE WHEN THE GOA EXPECTS TO HAVE ALL OF THE REQUIRES INSPECTORS ON THE FEDERAL PAYROLL.

5. SINCE DRAFTING THIS CABLE WE HAVE RECEIVED 079282, THANKS. WILL STILL PROCEED ALONG THE LINES OUTLINED IN PARA 4 ABOVE.
HILL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: FOOD INSPECTION, MEATS, EXPORT CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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